



Spencer Community School District Work Based Learning Plan

June 27, 2022



Philosophy

The Iowa Lakes Corridor Region faces population stagnation, aging, and low wages. Exposing students to local employment and career opportunities encourages students to stay or come back to the area.

The philosophy of the Work-based Learning Program at Spencer High School aligns with the district mission statement: “All students will develop maximum knowledge and skills to become lifelong learners and responsible citizens.” Through work based learning and career exposure, students will acquire the skills and tools necessary to make more informed decisions around their future plans and transition away from high school.

Goals

- To create a pipeline of talented individuals with skill and experience to work in a variety of career fields within the Iowa Lakes Corridor Region.
- To expose students to career fields and develop basic employability skills including teamwork, communication, and problem solving.
- To engage community partners to create real-world experiences for students in partnership with Spencer High School.

Essential Elements of Work-Based Learning

1. Academic Preparation

- a. Spencer students begin learning about careers in the early grades of elementary school through school counselor instruction. Spencer CSD used Kuder for grades 1-5.
- b. Students continue academic preparation at Spencer Middle School, again through school counselors. Beginning in grade 6, Spencer uses Xello. Middle School experiences include but are not limited to the 8th grade career fair, which includes a mock interview with community members for each student.
- c. The high school experience completes SCSD Work-Based Learning.
 - i. Tier 1: Students complete a Careers class in 9th grade wherein they explore their aptitudes and the career strands. In subsequent years students participate in 6 career visits, including but not limited to speakers in the school, visiting an area business that aligned with their interests, and, for some students, their own jobs throughout high school.
 - ii. Tier 2: All juniors complete a mock interview again, also with a community member. Juniors furthermore complete both a college resume and a work resume which they take with them as graduates.
 - iii. Tier 3: Students in grades 11-12 participate in No Boundaries (NoBo), patterned after Iowa BIG. Spencer shares this Iowa STEM BEST program with Okoboji High School and Graettinger-Terril-Ruthven-Ayrshire. Seniors participate in Extended Career Experiences (ECEs). These half-day, every day experiences allow them to work in up to 4 workplaces that match their interests and aptitudes. Among these ECEs some students participate in Pre-Apprenticeships, and others in Registered Apprenticeships. Each of these programs is detailed below.

2. Partnership Between Education and Industry

During Tier 3 experiences students are integrally connected to industry partners. Our business partners assess students throughout the student's time, along with an MOC-certified teacher.

3. Academic Follow-Up

Tier 3 students self-assess throughout their experience, and collaborate with both teachers and business mentors to acknowledge their strengths and find opportunities for growth as a potential industry employee.

Work-Based Learning Roles and Responsibilities - Staffing

Role	Responsibilities
Work-Based Learning Coordinator	This role is shared between the High School Principal, High School Careers Coordinator Careers Coordinator: Coordinates industry partners with students, oversees the ECE program High School Principal: Coordinates Careers Coordinator and NoBo teacher, and oversees all WBL planning and execution Director of School Improvement: Assists the HS Principal and Careers Coordinator as needed
Industry Partners	Spencer has numerous business partners who host students in their ECEs and who submit projects to the NoBo students. Responsibilities are outlined in the Spencer MOC Framework below
Students	Students work with parents, counselors, Careers Coordinator, principal and industry partners to complete WBL experiences
Parents or Guardians	Parents must sign off on a roles and responsibilities document indicating their role in assuring student success
School Counselors	School counselors assist students in ensuring their academic plan meets student needs and interests for post-high school planning. Counselors also assist in registration for concurrent enrollment coursework and monitoring accrual of credits toward a diploma
Work-Based Learning Assistant (WBLA)	This newly acquired position funded through a STEM BEST HD grant provides support to the Careers Coordinator and NoBo teacher. The WBLA coordinates projects for NoBo and assists the Careers Coordinator in forging new industry partnerships as well as monitoring students on the job during their ECEs. This employee will be permanently funded as a shared employee between Spencer Community Schools and the Spencer Chamber of Commerce
Additional MOC Endorsed Teachers	Teachers in CTE fields assist the Careers Coordinator with logistics for ECEs in their respective fields of expertise. These teachers also assess students and communicate with industry partners.

Community Assets

Iowa Lakes Corridor of Opportunity economic development
Spencer Chamber of Commerce
Spencer Main Street
Spencer City Hall
Iowa WORKS
US Department of Labor

Student Safety Education

SHS works hand in hand with OSHA to provide ECE students with OSHA certification. Employers Council of Iowa pays this fee on the students' behalf. Students in Health Sciences ECEs complete several health-related certifications, including Basic Life Support and Hemorrhage Control.

Legal Considerations

Spencer CSD follows State and Federal Child Labor laws, working hand in hand with local Iowa WORKS personnel and Iowa Department of Labor personnel.

Liability and Insurance

SHS ECE students are insured by Spencer Community Schools workmans compensation.

Equal Access/Affirmative Action

It is the goal of SCSD that every student complete a Tier 3 work-based learning experience before graduating. Staff and industry partners work hand-in-hand to ensure equal access and full participation for all students.

Wages

Students in Tier 3 experiences do not earn wages with the exception of students in Spencer Registered Apprenticeship program, as outlined below.

Source for components above: [Iowa Work-based Learning Guide](#)

Professional Development

Teachers receive on-going professional development through attendance at work-based learning conferences in Iowa.

Business and Industry partners receive guidance in working with students from school staff, including NoBo certified staff and Career Coordinator.

Perkins Alignment

Spencer CSD does not use Perkins funding toward work-based learning.

Costs & Funding

Whenever possible, WBL is funded through grants at SCSD.

SCSD supports the salaries for all WBL staff through the general fund, except the WBL Assistant, which is currently supported by the STEM BEST HD grant.

Supplies for NoBo and the ECEs are purchased through the SHS building budget, including reimbursement of mileage for students who transport themselves to their ECEs. These supplies include personal protective equipment for construction trades, manufacturing, ag, and auto ECE participants, and stethoscopes for health sciences ECE participants. For the PPE, the anticipated cost is \$250/student, including steel-toes boots, goggles, welding helmet, hard hat, basic carpentry tools, gloves, welding apron, welding gloves, etc.; stethoscopes are approximately \$15 each.

The Spencer Schools Foundation supports supplies for the ECEs through donors.

Challenges & Barriers

Child Labor Laws, Insurance, Safety: In the early stages of WBL SHS staff met with industry partners and Iowa WORKS to partners could hear directly from school and the Dept of Labor. All but one partner continued with us at that time.

Paying Students: Schools cannot pay students in the current system. An unsuccessful attempt was made through a STEM grant to pay students \$10/hour for 10 hours. SCSD has no plans to

pay students under the current WBL plan, except in the RA. If conditions change, SCSD supports students earning money for WBL.

Credentials/Certificates and College Credit: The Careers Coordinator continues to research available credentials and certificates that students may earn to take with them into the workforce. SHS students complete the NCRC test as freshmen and seniors. College credits are dependent upon rigorous Higher Learning Commission (HLC) requirements on teacher transcripts. In 2014 the first ECE students earned up to 12 college credits each. Due to increased HLC rigor, current ECE students earn 1-3 credits.

Student Scheduling: Counselors and the Careers Coordinator work together to create student schedules that allow students enough time for WBL as well as meeting graduation requirements.

Staffing: SCSD School Board supports WBL, including release time for 5 teachers to teach and access students for WBL. Gaining enough flexibility in staff in order for 100% of SCSD students to graduate with WBL is an ever-present challenge. SHS has 3 MOC endorsed teachers, a valuable asset for overseeing students in WBL.

Pandemic After Effects: Industry Partners have tightened restrictions on access. SHS WBL staff work individually with Partners to accommodate students.

Spencer Work-Based Learning Documents

[Spencer High School MOC Framework](#)

Outlines SHS ECEs, including Training Agreements and Assessments

[Spencer Community School District Apprenticeship Description](#)

Describes RA opportunities at SHS

Note: Spencer has been awarded a TPRA participant under the Storm Lake Consortium. The document will be linked here in the future.

[No Boundaries Description](#)

Describes No Boundaries experiences, examples of completed projects and includes photos of the work-space in Spencer City Hall